

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 FLOREN 00163 151649Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00
PA-01 USIA-06 SP-02 PM-05 NSC-05 SS-15 /057 W
-----121272 160343Z /73
R 151700Z MAR 78
FM AMCONSUL FLORENCE
TO AMEMBASSY ROME
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 1968

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE FLORENCE 0163

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, VT
SUBJECT: LOCAL GOSSIP REGARDING FLORENCE,S CARDINAL
BENELLI

REF: FLORENCE 0162

1. IN DISCUSSING CARDINAL BENELLI SPEECH REPORTED REFTEL
WITH SOME OF OUR CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC CONTACTS, THEY
VOLUNTEERED OPINION THAT MANY CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS AND
CHURCH OFFICIALS BELIEVE THAT BENELLI WAS SENT TO
FLORENCE IN ORDER TO REDUCE THE POSSIBILITY OF HIS
ELECTION AS POPE RATHER THAN TO ENHANCE THIS
POSSIBILITY. THEIR "RATIONALE" IS THAT BENELLI,S VIGOROUS
ACTIVITY AS A VATICAN ADMINISTRATOR ANTAGONIZED MUCH OF
VATICAN OFFICIALDOM AND THAT THE ASSIGNMENT OF THIS ACTIVE
AND ARTICULATE ANTI-MARXIST TO AN AREA SUCH AS TUSCANY
MIGHT RESULT IN GETTING HIS FINGERS SO BADLY BURNED
POLITICALLY THAT HIS PRESTIGE WOULD BE SUFFICIENTLY
LOWERED TO TAKE HIM OUT OF THE PAPAL RACE.

2. AS REGARDS THE SPEECH ITSELF THE SAME CONTACTS FELT
THAT IT WAS STRONGER THAN WAS NECESSARY AND WE COULD
NOT FIND ANY OF THEM WHO APPRECIATED BENELLI,S ALMOST
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EQUALLY STRONG CRITICISM OF CATHOLICS.
GORDON

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PERSONAL OPINION, RELIGIOUS LEADERS, POLITICAL SITUATION, PERSONNEL ASSIGNMENTS
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Draft Date: 15 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Handling Restrictions: n/a
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ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780367/aaaaceoh.tel
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Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
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